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A STUDY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS CELEBRITY ENDORSED PRODUCTS IN CHENNAI CITY

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ABSTRACT

Celebrity endorsement has become very popular element in the advertisement nowadays. Corporate uses this opportunity to grab the market and for expand their operation and promotion of their brand and product. More than ten percent of television advertising includes celebrity endorsements. The purpose of this research paper is to explore customer perception towards celebrity endorsement. Nine factors were manipulated in this research paper which is attractiveness, trustworthiness, physical appearance, popularity, and image/Goodwill, and reliability, negative role of celebrity, aspiration, and brand for result. For those 103 samples from Chennai, Tamil Nadu was taken. Result shows that attractiveness of a celebrity endorsing a particular product/brand strongly influence a customer perception and impact of product and brand are more positive on the customer buying decision compare to celebrity endorsement. So celebrities' professional accomplishments and expertise mayserve as a logical connection with the products, and consequently make the endorsement more believable to consumers.

Key words: Celebrity Endorsement, Attractiveness, Brand value, Factor Analysis

Cite this Article: V. Durga Devi and R. Thanga Prashath, A Study on Consumer Perception and Attitude towards Celebrity Endorsed Products in Chennai City, *International Journal of Management (IJM)*, 11(11), 2020, pp. 2873-2882.
https://iaeme.com/Home/issue/IJM?Volume=11&Issue=11

1. INTRODUCTION

The modern world of marketing communication has become colorful and inundated with advertisements, and it is hard to get noticed. It is an uphill task for the designer of an advertising campaign to differentiate itself from others and attract viewers' attention (Gopinath, 2019 b).

In this jet age, people tend to ignore all commercials and advertisements while flipping through the magazines and newspapers or viewing TV. But even then, the glamour of a celebrity seldom goes unnoticed. Thus, celebrity endorsement in advertisement and its impact on the overall brand is of great significance. Even in some occasions, celebrity is more remembered than the Band name (Gopinath & Irismargaret, 2019; Gopinath, 2011). Celebrities are people who enjoy specific public recognition by a large number of certain groups of people. They have some characteristic attributes like attractiveness, extraordinary lifestyle or special skills that are not commonly observed. This attitude sets a trend that, even opening ceremony of malls and hotels are accompanied by some celebrity to capture the attention of the people (Gopinath & Kalpana, 2019). Some cases the motive of purchase itself driven by brand ambassador (Gopinath & Kalpana, 2011).

Thus, it can be said that within a society, celebrities generally differ from the common people and enjoy a high degree of public awareness. Among the classic forms of celebrities, actors (e.g., Shahrukh Khan Etc.), models (e.g., Kamal Hasan, Meena, Amithab Bhachan, etc.), sports-persons (e.g., M.S Dhoni, Sachin Tandulkar, etc.) are significant. Even the people's perception on consumables is differing from durables (Gopinath, 2019 a).

In this process, the companies hire celebrities from a particular field to feature in its advertisement campaigns. The promotional features and images of the product are matched with the celebrity image, which tends to persuade a consumer to fix up his choice from a plethora of brands. Although this sounds pretty simple, but the design of such campaigns and the subsequent success in achieving the desired result calls for an in-depth understanding of the product, the brand objective, choice of a celebrity, associating the celebrity with the brand, and a framework for measuring the effectiveness.

"Any brand can get a celebrity. That is easy. But getting a celebrity consistent with the right brand, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose and in the right way that is not easy."

In this age of intense competition, where capturing a position in the consumers' mind space is extremely tough, celebrity endorsements give an extra edge to the companies for holding the viewers' attention. Celebrities can catalyze brand acceptance and provide the enormous momentum that brands require by endorsing the intrinsic value to the brand.

While selecting a celebrity as endorser, the company has to decide the promotional objective of the brand and how far the celebrity image matches with it. The selection is in fact a collaboration, from which both the company and the celebrity gains.

The most important attribute for a celebrity endorser is the trustworthiness. The target audience must trust that a celebrity carries a particular image and it must match with the product.

The second attribute in order of importance is likeability. The celebrity also must be accepted as a popular icon by a large cross section of the audience.

Companies use celebrity endorser because they are considered to have stopping power, i.e., a celebrity can be a very useful tool to draw attention to advertising messages in a cluttered media environment. The overall popular image coupled with exact product-image match enhances the consumer attention resulting in greater brand recall.

Studies have proved that celebrities endorsing a company or brand can greatly increase consumers' awareness of an advertisement, capture their attention and make the advert more memorable.

Additionally, when a celebrity endorses your company, it tells the consumer that the company is reputable, has good products or good customer service and is a sound company to deal with. Remember, the celebrity's own image and reputation is at stake.

The purpose for this study was to investigate the customers' attitude towards celebrity's advertised products.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Klebba and Unger (1983) uses multiple regression analyses to examine the impact of positive and negative source information on the credibility of the advertising source and on audience perceptions of the company and advocated product. The results of their study indicate that the cognitive and affective dimensions of credibility are influenced differently by negative information.

Gan (2006) explores the Chinese consumer's behaviors toward celebrity and non celebrity commercials. The results shows that Chinese consumers prefer Celebrity commercial & respondents collectively like celebrity who have more professional career skill, even though there are other different reasons existing such as good appearances, good disposition, and good career spirit.

Hunter and Davidsson (2008) studied negative information's impact on celebrity entrepreneurship. There results shows that negative information about the celebrity might leads to negative attitude towards the new venture and promotion, new ventures can potentially reduce damage to their brand by distancing themselves from the celebrity, however, such a maneuver may not be as effective when the new venture is run by a celebrity entrepreneur. The study of Usharani & Gopinath (2020 a) has also insisted even marketing of groceries and supermarkets like Big Basket also requires celebrity endorsement for successful marketing. The rapidly increasing the expectation of the customer in different manner. Everyone knows that reliability of customers is the reflection of trust (Usharani & Gopinath, 2020 b).

Schlecht (2003) examines the relationship between celebrity endorsements and brands, by applying a selection of widely accepted principles of how consumers' brand attitudes and preferences can be positively influenced. Thereby the concepts of source credibility and attractiveness, the match-up hypothesis, the meaning transfer model and the principles of multiple product and celebrity endorsement were used. A brief assessment of the current market situation indicates, that celebrity endorsement advertising strategies can under the right circumstances indeed justify the high costs associated with this form of advertising. Several failures show, it is essential for advertisers to be aware of the complex processes underlying celebrity endorsement.

Khatri (2006) studied celebrity endorsement as strategic promotion. An assessment of current market situation indicated that celebrity endorsement and advertising strategies if correctly blended in terms of marrying the strengths of the brands with the celebrity's quality indeed justify the high cost associated with this form of advertising. However, advertising needs to be aware of the complex processing underlying celebrity processing endorsement by gaining clarity on described concepts of celebrity source creditability and attractiveness, match-up hypothesis, multiple product endorsement etc. Marketer has to decide how far the benefits outweigh the risks associated. Advertisers agree that celebrity endorsement does not itself guarantee sales. It can create a buzz and make a consumer feel better about the product, which in turn has to come to expectation of customers as a real star by delivering the promise.

There have been instances where the endorsement or real consumer has started working better than celebrity endorsers. In fact much research needs to be done on customer testimonials, which tend to induce better creditability and helps in carving the competent, rational, knowledgeable customer of today who is said to be the real hero.

Money et al. (2006) studied the impact of negative information of celebrity on brand. They conducted comparative study in the U.S. and Japan to investigate whether the form of negative information about a celebrity (other- or self-oriented) results in differential evaluations of the

brand endorsed by the celebrity. Surprisingly, we find that both Japanese and Americans view endorsed products more positively in the presence of self-oriented negative information, a possible suspension of the famous fundamental attribution error in human judgment.

Amos et al. (2008) studied the relationship between use of a celebrity endorser and the resulting effectiveness of that endorsement. Kruskal-walls non-parametric test is used to identify relationship between use of a celebrity endorser and the resulting effectiveness of that endorsement. Negative information about the celebrity exercised the large impact on celebrity endorsement effectiveness in advertising. This result underscored the high risk associated with using celebrity endorsers as well as the huge impact negative information about that celebrity can have on the consumer perception.

Escalas and Bettman (2009) studied consumers appropriate brand symbolism that comes from celebrity endorsement to construct and communicate their self-concepts. Study 1 finds that celebrity endorsement enhances self-brand connections when consumers aspire to be like the celebrity, but harms them when consumers do not; this effect is more pronounced when the brand image is congruent with the celebrity's image. This effect is further moderated by the degree to which a brand communicates something about the user, with more symbolic brands having stronger effects than less symbolic brands. Study 2 finds that the effect of celebrity endorsement on self- brand connections is augmented when consumers' self-esteem is threatened. Consumers self- enhance by building connections to favorable celebrity images or distancing themselves from unfavorable celebrity images. Gopinath, (2019 e) concluded that consumer perception influence to brand awareness of household fabric care products.

Hypotheses

H1: Physical attractiveness, source credibility and celebrity congruency of endorser will positively impact on customer's attitude towards advertised brand.

H2: Physical attractiveness, source credibility and celebrity congruency of endorser will highly intend customer to purchase advertised product.

3. DATA COLLECTION

The data was collected by using questionnaire to check the perception of customers toward the celebrity advertisement. The questionnaire was designed to check the celebrity attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise and customer's views about celebrity advertisement, their purchase intention and brand perception.

The independent variables in this study are the physical attractiveness of the celebrity, the source credibility of the celebrity and the celebrity/brand congruency of the product. The dependent variables of this study are the attitudes toward the advertisement and the product and the consumers' intent to purchase the product.

4. METHODOLOGY

Data was analyzed by SPSS. Factor Analysis was first run to determine the relationship between the physical attractiveness of the celebrity and its influence on the consumer's intent to purchase the advertised product, their attitude toward the advertisement, and their attitude toward the brand. After looking at the Factor Analysis, it was concluded that the congruency questions needed to be separated into two Groups (I &II). Question -1, was separated from questions 2-5. Then Factor Analysis was run again for congruency question -1 and congruency -2-5. ANOVA was run next to measure the significance of the considered variables. Linear Regression was run to see where the significance lies. The purchase intentions, attitude toward the advertisement and the brand were measured against the dependent variables. Internal

reliability and consistency was required to be checked, so the next test that was run was Cronbach's Alpha.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

Of the respondents (13.6%) surveyed were female and (86.4%) were male. (46.6%) of the people were single, while (53.4%) were married. Almost half (44.7%) of the people surveyed had an income of Rs: 25, 000 or below; (37.9%) had an income of Rs. 26,000-50,000; (13.6%) had an income of Rs: 51,000-75,000; (3.9%) had an income of Rs: 76,000-Rs: 100,000. Of all, (54.4%) of the people surveyed were between the ages of 18-29; (31.1%) were between ages of 30-39; (10.7%) were between ages of 40-49 and (3.9%) were between ages of 50-59. (1.9%) of the people had below high school qualification, (1%) had a high school diploma, (1.9%) had an associate's degree, (33%) had a bachelor's degree and (62.1%) of the people had a graduate of professional degree. (55.3%) of the people were employees of public organization, (31.1%) were employees of private organization, (9.7%) were employees of semi-Govt. organization and (3.9%) were employees of multinational organization. These results are shown in the Anova, Regression and Co-efficient tables.

For this study we selected students from different areas of Chennai. The sample consists of 103 students studying in different colleges of Chennai city. Students were approached through questionnaire for data collection.

Sampling Design

These respondents were interviewed through a pretested, well structured questionnaire which was administered personally.

Research Tools

Five point likert scale has been used for the said purpose ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. To find out the customer perception and attitude towards celebrity endorsement and factors that influence purchase behavior of customer, Factor Analysis used for analyzing correlations between variables factor analysis, which reduces their number into fewer factors which explains much original data more economically.

Scope of the Study

From the literature review, it can be summarized that not much work has been done on celebrity endorsement in Chennai, Tamilnadu. This study is a comprehensive because there not much work has been done on this topic in Chennai region. More than ten percent of television advertising includes celebrity endorsements.

Limitations of the study

- The biasness of the respondents may affect the result of the study so for as primary data is concerned. Because of the biases of the respondents the result of the study may not be the same for all the cities and at all places.

- The survey has been conducted in Chennai region only. It may not reflect the public opinion at large.

- The sample size has been small n =103 which may not reflect the broader picture.

- Time and cost constraints.

Analysis and Interpretation

Factor analysis was first run to determine the relationship between the physical attractiveness of the celebrity and its influence on the consumer's intent to purchase the advertised product, their attitude toward the advertisement, and their attitude toward the brand. This was done to show if the ideas, (unattractive/attractive, not classy/classy, ugly/beautiful, plain/elegant, and not sexy/sexy) were congruent with each other and how well they matched up together. Factor analysis showed that each idea was congruent with the others, so the significance of the ideas was measured next.

One-way ANOVA was run next to see if significant differences between the means of the variables. The results are given in the following tables. For customer's attitude, Source Credibility & congruency's significance level is less than 5% implying that both these are significant. Physical attractiveness is just above 5% meaning thereby that it is not that insignificant. The results are insignificant for ANOVA done for purchase intention. The F-Statistic also confirms this insignificance because all observed F-Values are less than critical F-Value of 2.76.

Table 1 ANOVA

Group-I		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Physical Attractiveness	Between Groups	35.285	28	1.260	**1.579**	**.062**
	Within Groups	59.058	74	.798		
	Total	94.343	102			
Source Credibility	Between Groups	63.714	28	2.275	**2.348**	**.002**
	Within Groups	71.700	74	.969		
	Total	135.414	102			
Congruency	Between Groups	54.528	28	1.947	**4.371**	**.000**
	Within Groups	32.969	74	.446		
	Total	87.497	102			

Table 2

Group-II		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Physical attractiveness	Between Groups	44.072	37	1.191	**1.540**	**.064**
	Within Groups	50.272	65	.773		
	Total	94.343	102			
Source Credibility	Between Groups	58.015	37	1.568	**1.317**	**.164**
	Within Groups	77.398	65	1.191		
	Total	135.414	102			
Congruency	Between Groups	40.691	37	1.100	**1.527**	**.067**
	Within Groups	46.806	65	.720		
	Total	87.497	102			

Predictors: (Constant), congruency, physical attractiveness, Source Credibility

Dependent Variable: purchase intention

Table 3 Coefficients (a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
1	(Constant)	2.026	.439		4.620	.000
	Physical attractiveness	.039	.072	.050	.543	.588
	Source Credibility	.183	.061	.280	3.011	.003
	congruency	.320	.072	.395	4.464	.000

Dependent Variable: purchase intention

The values to be considered are that of R-squared. It refers to the fitness of model & how well is the explanatory power of the model. The model used in hypothesis 1 has 43% and model 2 has 34% explanatory power of the dependent variable. Both these are towards the higher side, proving the significance of the overall model fitness.

Cronbach's Alpha was run for each ad's set of physical attractiveness questions for a measure of internal consistency. Both values of α calculated fall in the satisfactory category, implying internal consistency.

Table 4

No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
3	0.618
2	0.830

Regression tests were run once to test Hypothesis H1 and then to test Hypothesis H2. Customer's attitude is the dependent variable in hypothesis H1 and Purchase Intention is the dependent variable in the hypothesis H2. The results are as under:

H1: Physical attractiveness, source credibility and celebrity congruency of endorser will positively impact on **customer's attitude** towards advertised brand.

Table 5 Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.653(a)	**.427**	.409	.57278

Predictors: (Constant), Congruency, Physical Attractiveness, Source Credibility

Table 6 ANOVA (b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	24.177	3	8.059	24.564	.000(a)
	Residual	32.480	99	.328		
	Total	56.657	102			

Predictors: (Constant), Congruency, Physical Attractiveness, Source Credibility

Dependent Variable: Customer Attitude

Table 7 Coefficients (a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
1	(Constant)	2.274	.404		5.634	.000
	Physical attractiveness	.100	.066	.129	1.508	.135
	Source Credibility	.072	.056	.112	1.298	.197
	congruency	.442	.066	.549	6.695	.000

Dependent Variable: Customer Attitude

H2: Physical attractiveness, source credibility and celebrity congruency of endorser will highly **intend customer to purchase** advertised product.

Table 8 Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.577(a)	**.333**	.313	.62237

Predictors: (Constant), congruency, physical attractiveness, Source Credibility

Table 9 ANOVA (b)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression: 19.162 Residual: 38.347 Total: 57.510	3 99 102	6.387 .387	16.490	.000(a)

Predictors: (Constant), Congruency, Physical Attractiveness, Source Credibility
Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Table 10 Coefficients (a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
1	(Constant)	2.026	.439		4.620	.000
	Physical attractiveness	.039	.072	.050	.543	.588
	Source Credibility	.183	.061	.280	3.011	.003
	Congruency	.320	.072	.395	4.464	.000

Dependent Variable: purchase intention

The values to be considered are that of R-squared. It refers to the fitness of model & how well is the explanatory power of the model. The model used in hypothesis 1 has 43% and model 2 has 34% explanatory power of the dependent variable. Both these are towards the higher side, proving the significance of the overall model fitness.

6. CONCLUSIONS

As can be interpreted from the results, celebrity endorsement has reasonable impact on customers as per their attitude and purchase intention. Celebrity endorsement has come out as not only an influential factor but rather a causal factor in the results of this paper. Physical attractiveness, credibility and congruence of celebrity with reference to the endorsed advertisement all have impact on the customer's perception about the advertised product. The same is the case of online shopping also (Gopinath, 2019 c). The tests have by and large bore favorable significant results in the light of variables used. Thus, celebrity endorsements do result in sales hike. Hence the up and about trend these days.

Another implication of this paper is that it goes out to show the extent to which today's customer is aware and influenced by media. Celebrities are worshipped as icons now. If the customer perceives the physical attractiveness, credibility and the match between celebrity and the product to be favorable, these inertly being influenced to like that product which leads to the purchase of that product. Features of the product itself take secondary importance. Hence it is suggested that Government has to take initiatives to provide awareness among the consumers that, all the features described by the celebrities are for the sake of advertisement and need not be true in all the cases (Gopinath, 2019 d).

A limitation of this research is that the data has been taken from professionals only. Although 103 is a significant number of respondents but since all were working respondents, so the results may represent a certain sect of society. The results might be different or diversified, had the study been conducted group wise, as on, students, professionals, non-working, etc.

However, research has no limit and there is a room for extensive research in this regard in future. Since the results of this study are positive, another area of research can be impact and efficacy of media on its viewers with respect to marketing products.

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